Volume LXXXI CHICAGO, May 2, 1918 Number 9

UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion

LIEBKNECHT IN PRISON

"We Germans in Prussia have three cardinal rights: the right to be soldiers, to pay taxes, to keep our tongues between our teeth. . . Consider well the facts: as long as the German people do not rise and enforce their own will, the assassination of the people will continue. Let thousands of voices shout: 'Down with the shameless extermination of nations! Down with those who are responsible for these crimes!'" ("In Militarism.")

Liebknecht, alone you chose the freeman's way—
You would not keep your tongue between your teeth;
Like a bright sword, whipt sudden from the sheath,
Flashed that edged word of yours in dangerous play!
Hence do you suffer civil death today.
Yet, for that word you did to them bequeath,
You LIVE—while your compatriots, sunk beneath
A despot's will, in spiritual death delay.

What thoughts are yours—past outer sight and sound—
At heavy toil, in penal silence drear,
The while the wheel of Moloch still goes round
And men are broken on it? . . . Can you hear
(As do our Indians, stooping to the ground),
Oncoming tumult overlords must fear?

—*Edith M. Thomas.*

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UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

Vol. LXXXI. THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1918 Number 9

TEMPLES.

He needs no temples for his prayer
Who hath the temple of the air.
He needs no altar at whose feet
To kneel who hath the open road
Where man his very God may meet
Bearing like man life's common load
Of sweetness and of song and care;
For love makes temples everywhere,
And little places sweet for prayer,
That have in them the quiet mood
Of peace and simple brotherhood,
And courage, patience and delight
In living true and acting right;
Of thinking sweet and helping on
The fellow-pilgrims of the day
Who seek the temples of the dawn
And find God home where'r they pray.

Baltimore Sun. —*Folger M'Kinsey.*

In these times when the political map of Europe seems to be a blurr, "The Study of Bohemia," published in the April number of the *Open Court* by Emil Reach is very timely, for it throws some light on a dark subject. This article tells us that Bohemia is only one-third as large as Georgia and one-thirteenth as large as Texas. The crown of Bohemia was given to a Hapsburg ninety-four years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, and since that date (1532) Bohemia has been a part of Austria; but notwithstanding this union of nearly three centuries, the Bohemian thinks, loves, hates, prays as a Bohemian. They cherish the heritage of hate. Evidently the conquest of the sword does not conquer. Something else must be tried before nations are reconciled to one another.

The National Association of Distillers and Wholesale Dealers have published a "Prohibition Manual for 1915-1916" which purposes to be a summary of facts and figures dealing with prohibition. These friends of alcohol and manufacturers of booze are trying to beat back the irresistible "dry movement" with arguments that appeal to reason and a very meager array of men whose place in the life of today is conspicuous. Ridicule is failing and reason, human experience and the demonstration of the centuries seem to leave the liquor forces small room to stand on. Their final appeal, as set forth on the second page of the cover and marked "important" is to "campaign managers, speakers, writers and plain workers." It appeals to the voters not to forget that a legislator is their hired man. It calls for more petitioning to state legislatures, wiring to members and to get out every vote. This is honorable warfare. The cause of temperance will be served by every effort to "get out every vote."

Another venerable city builder, a consistent supporter of liberal things, a loving helper of Unity and the things Unity holds dear, has gone to his rest. C. C. Warren was born in Concord, Massachusetts, eighty-four years ago and there were centered in his life the best traditions and noblest inspirations of that spiritual center. For thirty years he was an active member on the Chicago Board of Trade. For forty-five years he was a citizen of Hinsdale, Ill., a charter member of Unity Church, a persistent helper in that society, which was first organized under the direction of William C. Gannett. Mr. Warren was a layman, a persistent missionary in the interests of religion, spiritually interpreted. By his side stood the faithful wife for fifty-nine years. She is left behind to live on cherished memories and to continue the high ministry in the interests of the larger brotherhood. Unity extends its sympathy to her, which should also ripen into congratulations. Few lives are permitted to know such fruitions as have been granted Mr. and Mrs. Warren.

Of course, as expected, the publication in Unity of the series of sermons on Modern Mysticism has brought forth many comments, both of commendation and criticism. As we duly expected, the devotees of all the "cults" that claim special inspiration and start from an outside revelation, either of text or of person, promptly dispose of all those who do not accept their position or interpretation as "not knowing what they are talking about." We are quite willing to plead guilty to the charge. The last effort to correct Unity comes from the official censor of the Christian Science Church. He brings a written list of "serious misapprehensions promulgated in the sermon on Christian Science." He first charges that the title is wholly misrepresenting the movement, viz., "Christian Science; The Neo-Buddhism in the West." But he modestly proceeds in the same sentence to explain that "Christian Science heals diseases and sin in accordance with the teachings and examples of Christ, while the claims of Buddhism rest on a heathen basis." Just the point of similarity the preacher had in mind, but did not state as succinctly as this critic! One finds the divine flow of healing coming into the

world through the Christ, the other through the Buddha. Our censor next objects to classifying Christian Science with "New Thought, Mental Science, Faith Healing, Hypnotism, Suggestion, Spiritualism and other systems," which he claims are based on the finite human mind, while Christian Science bases its practice on "absolute reliance upon the power of the divine mind." Well that is what the preacher tried to say. They all have a certain superlative confidence in the power of mind over matter and the diseases incident to matter or theories about matter which is non-existent. Some call it "human," some "divine," suggesting again the subtle point of association. Thus a striking coincidence if not a philosophic relation. The critic, of course, objects to our version of the story of Dr. Quimby's and Mr. Wiggin's relation to the whole movement, which the outside student "unilluminated by authority" is compelled to accept. We are told that the founder of Christian Science objected to the term "mother" and that she never rose to "an adorable position." The preacher simply quoted from testimony of their own members found in their own publications. All these objections seem to arise from the failure to understand the use of terms. The Catholic Church alone in the Christian centuries has accepted the words "dogma" and "dogmatism" in their true sense. The Protestant world has made them the terms of reproach. The Catholic world has based its existence upon them. Religion taught authoritatively resting on a revelation deeper than reason and independent thereof; all forms of religious faiths, claiming "special revelations" and assuming to be given by inspiration from Heaven to some particular souls and on some specific occasions in a peculiar manner, are dogmatic religions. And those who deny this claim may logically be charged with "not knowing what they are talking about." And the more they attempt to explain or to analyze the claim by the scientific method of study they only add to the confusion and "darken counsel with words."

The Chicago Inter-Church War Work

An imposing committee of some twenty members, mostly clerical, acting under the auspices of the Chicago Church Federation Council, issues a monthly bulletin in the interest of "war work." The April issue (No. 3) is a handsomely printed, large four-page circular. It is a document bristling with militancy. It calls upon the churches to provide the sinews of war, to increase the consumption of potatoes, to continuously save, etc., etc. On the opening page it starts out with the assumption that these churches represent Christianity and that in some way it has a right to interpret Christianity and that this "Christianity" has accepted the philosophy of Lloyd George, the Kaiser and the last statement of President Wilson, that nothing but a conclusive victory will save the ideals of free America and permit America to become a supreme influence for an enduring peace. These belligerent preachers in the name of the Prince of Peace, forgetting his doctrine of love, turn their backs upon the unarmed beatitudes while they make what seems to us a dangerous admission when they apparently accept the arbitrament of the sword as the only interpreter of the gospel of Jesus in international affairs at the present time. Has Christianity no representatives in the nations who carry the cross with equal confidence on the other side?

What if the Central Powers should succeed in prolonging the agony until the Allies have exhausted their resources in money, food, men or patience? Would that leave Germany spiritually triumphant, or would the Allies have been robbed of all their resources when their last gun was spiked or captured? Would truth, righteousness and love be left without a chance in the world should the "Huns" win on other lines? These very ministers, up to this war, loved to interpret the gospel of Jesus Christ in terms of earthly defeats and material poverty. Physical minorities were glorified by them. At other times these churches tried to lead the minds of little children in the ways of gentleness. They were taught to avoid hate and hating spirits. They sang the songs of love and at Christmas time caroled the gospel of the cradle and the cross in terms of universal brotherhood. This bulletin calls upon the preachers and Sunday School workers to organize all the men, women and children in their churches along battle lines. They would have the children eat more potatoes so that there will be more bread for the fighters, and giving to the "war funds" is defined as assisting civilization.

This war bulletin teaches an absolutely clear and consistent philosophy of statesmanship and religion. But it is the philosophy of the warrior in all times. It is the philosophy that reached its climax in the war policy of Germany; the philosophy of the Kaiser. This philosophy reaches its clearest statement in the utterances made familiar in the current newspapers, of Bernhardi, Roosevelt, Lloyd George, and at last if we understand the Baltimore speech, President Wilson. Is this the philosophy of the New Testament? Is it the *Gospel*—the good news of Him who went about doing good, who said to the sinning, "Neither do I condemn thee, go, sin no more."

We do not believe that this bulletin of the "fighting parsons" of Chicago represents the attitude of all the Christian ministers therein, although its pulpits weekly declare a gospel of bitterness and call upon God to justify our killing, our hating, our contempt of individual consciences when it does not echo the public conscience, which was never, unless the present

time be an exception, the highest conscience of the race or the saving conscience of any age.

We protest against thus identifying the cause of democracy with either or all the forces in the trenches. Let war triumph go with whatever standards it may, the world will still remain the open field for democracy. The earth is still a planet dedicated by divine decree to love, ordered by the power that swings the stars to still roll on forever towards righteousness.

We still believe that the cross and not the sword is the more adequate symbol by which Christianity is to conquer and we grieve when little children are marshalled under the banners of violence and their little hearts are burned with the passion for murder and a thirst for human gore under any conditions whatsoever.

Anti-German

In Woodrow Wilson's notable letter to Senator Overman, expressing his opposition to the so-called Court Martial Bill, there appears a single sentence which I would commend to the earnest consideration of every person who believes a pacifist necessarily to be a pro-German, and all pacifist activity a form of sedition and treason. The sentence to which I refer is the one in which the President states his opinion that the Court Martial Bill "is not only unconstitutional, but that *in character it would put us nearly upon the level of the very people we are fighting and affecting to despise.*"

Let it be repeated that the pacifist, especially the pacifist of the non-resistant type, is the one man above all others who abhors the German system of government, fears German militarism as a monstrous menace to democracy in the modern world, and seeks the elimination of this militarism as a condition of all progress in the ways of liberty. The pacifist is different from other loyal men not in his abhorrence of Germanism, but in his recognition of Germanism as fundamentally not an armed nation but an evil spirit. Germanism, or Prussianism as it is more frequently called, is the spirit which would reduce the individual to complete subjection in opinion and action to the overlordship of an autocratic state. It is the spirit which would raise the military power of the state to supreme control over the civil power. It is the spirit which places confidence in might as the determiner of right, and finds in war the arbiter of national destinies and the fosterer of the highest and noblest human virtues. Other ages have known this spirit; other countries today have social groups infested by this spirit. But Germany would seem to be unique in being "possessed," as it were, by this abhorrent "devil"!

Now the pacifist, as one who hates this spirit "with a perfect hatred," is sensitive to its manifestations in the individual and social life, and determined to cast it out wherever it may appear. It is this which explains the pacifist's unfaltering opposition to all attempts to suppress freedom of speech, press or assembly; his instant denunciation of mob terrorization; his plea for sympathetic understanding and treatment of the conscientious objectors to military service; his abhorrence of the substitution of military for civil processes of social control; his hostility to universal military training, and all measures calculated to discredit the resolves of the American people to make this war the end of all war, and weaken their faith that this fine thing can be done. The pacifist's attitude is determined in these matters not at all by disloyalty, or sympathy with spies and traitors, or desire for German victory. On the contrary, there is no man more hostile than he to such spiritual perversions! He is moved simply and solely by love of America, by devotion to her transcendent ideals of liberty and brotherhood, and by passionate desire to see these ideals maintained in unsullied purity in the vast hazard of universal war. Knowing the insidious temptations of battle against such a foe as Germany, he would hold the nation from falling to "the level of the very people we are fighting and affecting to despise," and thus win for America a triumphant victory of the spirit!

It is fortunate that, at such a time as this, President Wilson has defined with such clarity the spiritual peril of the hour. When he says that the Court Martial Bill is "altogether inconsistent with the spirit and practice of America," he reveals a host of things which we, as Americans, cannot do, even in time of war. His words are at once a warning and a challenge. Let all Americans everywhere hear, and answer!

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

The Pioneer State

The democratic state is a mutual adjustment for the collective benefit of its people. The individual under Democracy does not live for the state. He is not state property. The state has no control over him except that which individuals in co-operation have delegated. It is no part of the state's duty to promote the special prosperity of any individual or group. Special aid or privileges are extended to the one only at the expense of the many. The state is rather the umpire which decides questions of justice, the servant which by co-operation meets the needs of the many. Governments in general cannot be benevolent, merely just. The virtues of individual men it cannot have. It has nothing of its own to sacrifice. If it would be

kind on the one hand it becomes unjust on the other.

As the founders of the American Republic were frontiersmen scattered far and wide, without cities, without corporations, without great collective utilities, their democracy took the form of individualism. Demands of society, of collective action, of national power were little considered for they did not yet exist, have never existed to the extent prevailing in Europe.

Men of pioneer type, Roundhead, Pilgrim, Puritan, American, have detested favor and privilege and precedence of every kind. The toll of the rich and the dole to the poor are alike repugnant to them. John Hay once said of the people of the new state of Ohio: "They looked on no one as their superiors, and no one as their inferiors. They knew no want they could not themselves satisfy." To this Senator Bayard added the further note, "They were too self-willed and independent to allow any to rule over them but themselves."

America has been pre-eminently the land of pioneers; this fact still influences all her institutions. In an equal start, in equality before the law, in equal access to the land, to education, to legislation, her people find their political ideals. D. S. J.

ARBUTUS.

I did not think that I should hear
Again the robin's vernal song,
But there upon the bough his clear
Note sounds. The winter's been so long.

I have not thought, till now, to see
That starry flower the deepest snows
Kept safe beneath my maple tree—
Yes, there most certainly it grows;

And it must wonder I'm not there
To welcome it. I pray you seek
And fetch it me, and lay its fair
Sweet bloom against my paler cheek.

I feel my pain were less could I
But scent its woodsy fragrance, friend;
I think that I perhaps could die
In peace, and not regret life's end;

For I believe that sorrow hides
Our joy as winter hides the bloom
Beneath the snow—that joy abides,
Like arbutus, within the tomb.

You'll go? How kind. Here will I sleep
Till you return, when, if the bell
Be hushed, my favorite blossom heap
About me, saying—All is well.

—*John Rhuddlau.*

Gold buys plenty for the body, but nothing for the heart—nothing—nothing.
(*Seven Miles to Arden*) —*Ruth Sawyer.*

I wonder why it is that when small communities jump at conclusions, they so often jump the wrong way. —*David Grayson.*

The love of companionship can never be so dead in a man but that the voice of kindness may call it back to life again. —*Irving Bacheller.*

THE PULPIT

Must We Change Human Nature In Order To Abolish War and Other Social Ills?

Sermon preached by John Haynes Holmes of the Church of the Messiah.

I am to speak to you this morning upon the general question as to whether the transformation of human nature must be regarded as a necessary preliminary to the abolition of war and of the various other social ills which are besetting the world at the present moment. This question is occasioned by the fact that whenever a great campaign is started for some kind of change or improvement in the social order, it is at once met by the declaration that human nature is being left out of account, and that the campaign, therefore, whatever its outward results, is doomed to accomplish nothing that is permanently good. The basic element in society, it is said, is not the structure of the social organism, but the men and women who are the units of this organism. We may change social conditions as much as we like, establish any political and industrial order that we may think wise, bring in the Kingdom of God by legislative enactment till the crack o' doom—but human nature is still human nature, the bad man is still the bad man, and the vicious woman still the vicious woman, and our laws therefore ineffectual and all our elaborate social changes of no avail. Men are exactly the same men under one social status that they are under another; and the improvement wrought by what we call social reform an improvement only in appearance, and not at all in reality. The long and short of the matter is that the problem of a better world is a problem not of society at all, but of the single individual. The task of abolishing the evils from which we suffer in the present day is a task which takes us not into the field of social reform, but into the field of personal regeneration. The essential thing is human nature. This must be transformed from evil into good, and then strengthened and sustained in its good. Until this has been done, legislation, reform, social betterment, is only so much beating of the wind. When this has been done, all else will follow, for the clean man will insist upon building a clean house in which to live.

Applications of this doctrine, as I have said, are encountered wherever an earnest endeavor is made to strike direct and hard at any one of the social abominations of our time. Do we endeavor to prohibit the manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages? Then are we told that men who drink will insist upon drinking under any conditions, and that the effect of prohibition will only be to drive men from good whiskey to bad. Do we try to secure the enactment of new tenement house legislation, providing for the disinherited poor of our great cities fresh air, sunshine, decent sanitary appliances, the ordinary and basic standards of modern living? Then are we told that these people are hopeless—that they do not want, and will not use, bathtubs and toilets—that they prefer to live like pigs rather than like human beings. Or perhaps we talk about solving the great problem of an equitable distribution of wealth, and advocate some system of social ownership and control of industry

which will put the sources of income directly into the hands of the people! Then are we promptly informed that all such changes are superficial—that the distribution of ability and virtue is the real secret of the distribution of wealth—and that until we find some means of changing human nature, we shall have to content ourselves with looking upon the two classes of the "haves" and the "have nots."

It is in the matter of war, however, that this doctrine is most conspicuous and most impressive, especially at the present moment. Never has there been a time when the peacemakers of the earth have not been met by the challenge that, in their dreams of "the thousand years of peace," they were leaving human nature wholly out of account. Why talk about Hague conventions, arbitration treaties, leagues to enforce peace, disarmament, free trade and free seas? Why hope for any results from such casual changes in the organization of international relationships? We have war in modern times, exactly as we had it in ancient times. We have it when men are armed with machine guns and poisonous gases, just as we had it when they were armed with hatchets and bows and arrows. We have it with vast alliances and balances of power, exactly as we had it when the hand of Cain was lifted against Abel. This war business is not a matter of outward circumstance but of inward spirit. It is rooted primarily in the fibre of human nature. Man is at bottom brutal and combative. His native impulses are all competitive, aggressive and belligerent. He is a warrior born, and a warrior he will remain until he is born again. Says a distinguished American soldier, Gen. John J. P. Storey: "A few idealists may have visions that with advancing civilization war and its dread horrors will cease. (But) civilization has not changed human nature. The nature of man makes war inevitable. Armed strife will not disappear from the earth until human nature changes." All of which reminds us that men are not so different from the animals of whom Isaac Watts wrote in his familiar nursery rhyme:

> Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
> For God hath made them so,
> Let bears and lions growl and fight,
> For 'tis their nature too.

The logic of such a doctrine as this is of course obvious. If we are ever to get rid of our various social ills, and make this world anything like the dreams which we cherish of its future, we must focus our reforming zeal upon human nature, and not dissipate it in structural changes in the social order. All the reform activities of our time are only so much misdirected energy. Our business, if we are to be efficient, is to deal direct with the human heart. We must take hold of the individual man, and change his selfishness into unselfishness, his greed into generosity, his hatred into love—and this means not laws or statutes, not executive decrees or judicial decisions, but the old and well-tried processes of moral and religious education. If a man hates the good and loves the evil, it makes little difference what we do in the line of social betterment. He will still remain a creature of darkness and not of light. If a man loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, then again it makes little difference what may or may not be our laws and institutions. This man will still remain a son of God and a servant of the Most High. The essential thing is, after all, the soul. The essential task before mankind in his quest for a better world is that of the redemption of the soul. We must change human nature from evil to good, from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light. This do, and behold, "all these (other) things shall be added unto you"!

If we want a wellnigh perfect example of an endeavor to remake the world on the basis of this philosophy of reform through a transformation of human nature, we have it in the history of the Christian church. For reasons which I need not specify in this connection, the followers of Jesus very early became convinced of what they called the total depravity of human nature. Man was wholly bad, as a result of his inheritance from the sin of Adam; and in his natural condition he was incapable of good. This fact, of course, was an all-sufficient explanation of the evil laws, evil institutions, evil practices and customs which characterized the society which man had builded; and pointed as unerring as the north star to the path which must be followed in the endeavor to overcome these social ills. As man, in his original sin, is responsible for the evil condition of the world, it is man who must be changed, if this world is to be delivered. Jesus came to earth for no other purpose than to emphasize this central fact, and to show to men the way in which it may be accomplished. He charged his disciples in so many words that they should "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," for every creature must first be saved if the world is to be saved. And faithfully have his servants in all ages striven to obey his word! For nineteen hundred years the church has been dedicating itself to the exclusive task of trying to save individual men from the evil within themselves—that is, to change human nature from a state of sin to a state of virtue. In the Catholic world this undertaking has found expression in certain ritual formulas, such as baptism and the last unction. In the Protestant world resort has been had to the inward experience of faith, as registered in the familiar process of conversion. Liberal Christians have relied rather upon what Horace Bushnell called "spiritual nurture," by which he meant our modern system of religious education. But always, by all these different types of Christians, attention was focussed upon the individual soul, and a better world sought only as an indirect result of the redemption of human nature. This is the real explanation of the indifference of the Christian church through all the centuries to the social abominations of the time; and the difficulty of arousing the church today to the significance of our discovery of the social question. There are many other factors involved, of course, in this failure of Christianity to understand and support the great movements for social reform which characterize this day. But at bottom we have not blindness, or ignorance, or out-and-out-corruption, but a perfectly sincere conviction that the way to accomplish these reforms is not by changing laws but by changing men. The church is simply clinging in an unbelieving age to its ancient faith that the trouble with the world is human nature; and that if this can only be changed by the redemptive spirit of Christ, all will straightway be well with the world.

Now if ever there was a theory which had a thorough trying out, it is this theory of changing human nature; and if ever there was a theory which has

failed, it is this same theory. For nineteen hundred years, as we have seen, the Christian church has devoted itself to this great task of saving the world by saving the race. For nineteen hundred years it has preached and prayed and labored, built its cathedrals and meeting houses, conducted its services and masses, held its great campaigns of evangelization, sent out its devoted missionaries to the four corners of the earth. During most of this prolonged period, the church has possessed such power and exercised such influence over the lives of men as has been enjoyed by no other institution, either political or religious, in the history of mankind. As a result, it has wrought miracles in terms of individual regeneration, and these miacles have been many. But what have we got to show for this work in terms of the world and its myriad peoples? A few years ago it might have been argued, not without effect, that we had made immeasurable gains over the past, and that our civilization was one which gave promise of moral and spiritual fulfillment. I recall that the nineteenth centtury passed, and the twentieth century was received with certain prophecies of the speedy coming of the millennium. But I also recall that even in those carefree days there were men like Alfred Russell Wallace, who dared to assert that "our whole system of society is rotten from top to bottom, and the social environment as a whole . . . the worst that the world has ever seen." And now that the War has overwhelmed us with its welter of destruction, there is no man so poor as to do reverence to what has gone. For what does it mean when nineteen hundred years of effort attain as a climax not a heaven of prosperity and peace, but a hell of unexampled misery and horror? What can it mean but the simple fact that the church, as one agency at least of social redemption, has failed? The evils of an older day are still with us; and these combine with new evils of our own spawning, to weaken and destroy us. Even in the field of individual morality, we seem to have accomplished little or nothing. For who are the cannibals of ten thousand years ago who would not hang their heads in shame at their inability to perform, or even to conceive, the monstrous deeds which you and I have been forcd to witness during the last three years?

This doctrine of changing human nature as a condition of social betterment, therefore, has failed. Nor is it difficult to assess the reason of this failure! Some would contend that the trouble is with the church—that it has been too much concerned with the world that is to come instead of the world that now is—that it has laid too much emphasis upon theological terms of redemption and not enough upon ethical—that it has permitted or suffered an irreparable waste of energy on doctrinal controversies and ecclesiastical rivalries. These charges are all true, as we know to our sorrow. But I am ready to contend, on the other hand, that even if the church had been guilty of none of these faults, its failure to fashion this old world into the likeness of that Kingdom of which Jesus taught, and which has been in the heart of God through all the sad dark years, would have been the same. The trouble is not with the church, but with the theory upon which the church has been working through the centuries. It simply is not true that the way to change the world is to change human nature, and that the reformation of society must wait until individual men and women have been transfigured into saints. Let me bring to your minds at least two considerations that have bearing on this matter.

In the first place, may I point out that the idea that a change in human nature is the primary condition of the abolition of war and other social ills, involves the tacit assumption that there is something essentially wrong with human nature as it is—that men and women are at bottom bad, and must be made by some regenerative process to be good. This assumption is what appears in all the creeds of Christendom in the dogma of original sin, and it has been believed by every generation of Christians since St. Paul. And yet it is an assumption which has nothing to sustain it, except a foolish legend in a book of ancient Hebrew lore. To one who gives any study to human nature in its original aspects, the impressive thing is not in any sense its depravity, but on the contrary its moral .worth. Inexhaustible is the evidence of the native virtue of the primitive man—his loyalty to his gods, his valor in battle, his patience in suffering, his hospitality to the stranger, his instinctive response in terms of confidence and good-will to the friendly advances of the explorer. The primitive man undoubtedly has personal habits and social customs which do not altogether match our conceptions of decency and right, but his native character is that which is recognized the world around as spiritually noble. No argument for non-resistance, for example, is so impressive as that which is based on the invariable devotion of the barbarian to those who, like David Livingston, invariably practised fidelity and love. Or suppose we go to the other extreme of the racial scale, and examine the attributes of that great multitude of criminals and outcasts which constitute the shame of our modern civilization. It is easy to describe these unfortunates as bad, and describe their offences as the fruit of some kind of inherent degeneracy; but it is difficult, in the majority of cases, to find the evidence of the evil that is said to be within them. Even in the degradation of their fall, these persons oftentimes manifest qualities of courage, fidelity and unselfishness which might well put the more respectable members of the community to shame; and always they stand as the wreckage, through some disaster, of what was in the beginning beautiful. I never see a criminal but what I feel as though I were looking upon the ruins of some once noble cathedral, which had decayed from sheer neglect, or had been blown to pieces by the assaults of some marauder. Human nature, you say, depraved! Stand with me by the cradle of some new born babe, in the palace or in the slum, I care not which. Look at this little child in its native innocence, free as yet from the influences of the world into which it has come, and show me, if you will, the evidences of its wickedness. I believe in human nature. I hold it no accident that "human" and "humane" are at bottom the same word. My faith is that of William Ellery Channing, when he said, "I know (the) history (of human nature). I shut my eyes on none of its weaknesses and crimes. I understand the proofs by which despotism demonstrates that man is a wild beast, in want of a master and only safe in chains. But injured, trampled on, and scorned as our nature is, I still turn to it with intense sympathy and strong hope . . . I do and I must reverence human nature. Neither the sneers of a worldly scepticism, nor the groans of a gloomy

theology, disturb my faith in its godlike powers and tendencies."

But there is a second and much more serious aspect of this idea of changing human nature, to which I desire to draw your attention! What I have in mind at this moment is the fundamental mistake which is involved in approaching human nature at all as a moral unit, and describing it as either good or bad, divine or diabolical. "Nothing is good or bad," the poet tells us, "but thinking makes it so." What are our moral judgments on individuals or races but the reaction of our inner consciousness to what to us is simply favorable or unfavorable, familiar or unfamiliar. Have we not all of us long since come to recognize the injustice involved in imposing upon a lower or an alien civilization the moral standards of our own? Human nature, after all, is not fundamentally a moral unit. It belongs not half so much to the ethical field as to the psychological and biological. Human nature, in its basic aspects at least, is an organism; and it is to be studied and judged as an organism. The analogy of the growing plant suggests my meaning! Here is a rosebush, by which we mean a certain type of vegetable organism. In itself it is a thing to be regarded as neither good nor bad. It is simply a bundle, if I may so express it, of inner attributes and powers, and the problem of its life is the development of these attributes and powers to their full capacity. There are leaves to come forth, there are buds to appear, there are blossoms to bless the sky, there is fragrance to bathe the atmosphere. There is the fact, in other words, of an organism; and there is the problem of its growth. And the same fact and the same problem are dominant in the phenomenon of human nature. Gone forever is the time when this human nature of ours could be set one side as a kind of miraculous emanation from the Divine, and classified as good in its origin, or bad in its fall. We are thinking today in terms of evolution. We see our human nature as only a part of the vast unfolding process of earthly life. We look upon the men and women in the world as only so many specimens of a certain type of organism, and their problem, mental and spiritual, as well as physical, as the problem of organic growth. In the human being, as in the rosebush, there are faculties to be developed, powers to be fulfilled, fruits of the spirit to be grown like blossoms on the nodding spray. Judgments of what qualities are good or bad—decisions to prune that attribute and cultivate this other—these come later as man grows to self-consciousness, and comes to understand the purpose and desires of his life. But at bottom the problem remains from beginning to end one of growth, the full and perfect development of the innate capacities of the organism.

Now the moment we come to this idea of human nature as a spiritual organism, confronted with the simple problem of spiritual growth, we find ourselves face to face with that fact which is central to every doctrine of evolution—the fact of environment! Organisms survive by adaptation to environment, and they grow by response to the favorable conditions of environment. If I plant a healthy rosebush in my garden, and it does not thrive, I speedily make up my mind that there is something wrong not with the rosebush but with the garden. The soil is not fertile with nourishment for the plant. The sunshine is cut off by high fences or overhanging trees. It is a season of drought, and therefore there is little rain. The atmosphere is laden with poisonous fumes from the chemical factory across the way. Worms are eating at the roots, or slugs are devouring the leaves and buds. All of these things, or any one of them alone, are ruining my rosebush, giving it every appearance of being a bad rosebush. If I am a wise gardener, however, I will not pluck up the bush and cast it away. I will cleanse the garden, or else transplant the rosebush with all tenderness into another and better garden and there see if "a good tree" cannot be made to "bring forth good fruit."

Now what is true of vegetable nature is true also of human nature! Environment is central to the problem of growth. There are certain regions of the globe, for example, where climactic conditions are such that human nature must ever remain a feeble and stunted thing. Men and women have long inhabited the frozen regions of the north, as we know; but physically and mentally alike they represent a hopelessly undeveloped type of human species. The Esquimaux has remained for centuries just what he is at the present moment, not for the reason that he is, or ever was, an inferior being, but simply because the conditions of his environment present limits of development beyond which it is quite impossible for him to pass. The same thing holds true, of course, of the torrid regions of the globe. Here we have conditions exactly opposite to those found in the Arctic zone; the one place is as hot as the other is cold. But the result is the same in its stultifying effect on human nature. There are vast regions of the tropics where civilization has never taken root, where racial progress has never been manifest, where there may still be found the type of man who first made his appearance in the march of evolution some ten or twenty thousand years ago. It has been suggested again and again that these Central Africans represent an inferior specimen of the human species—and this may of course be in this case possible. But the suggestion is improbable, or at least unnecessary, for one only has to consider the environmental conditions in which these savages have lived for unnumbered years to understand their failure to advance. The tropics, like the frozen north, offer no opportunity to the human species. It is not without significance, perhaps, that civilized man has never quite been able to decide as to whether he should describe hell as a place of unbearable heat or of unimaginable cold!

Now, with primitive man it is these natural conditions of climate and soil which are the determining factors of his life. As civilization advances, however, this natural environment becomes less and less important, while the social environment—the environment, that is, of laws and institutions and economic systems—comes steadily to the fore. And it is this fact which brings us at once to the question as to the relation between human nature and the ills of modern society!

Did you ever stop to think of what we mean by social ills? Why we call some institutions bad, and others good—why we describe certain political and economic systems as just and others as grievously unjust? Is there any other reason, may I ask, than the simple fact that we observe that some social conditions seem to repress and destroy human nature, while other social conditions seem to foster and glorify

it? Take laws and institutions apart from men and women, and what do they mean to us? How are we going to judge them as good or bad in and for themselves? How are we going to prove that democracy is better than autocracy, apart from the character of the populations that live under these two respective systems of government? Human nature is central—human nature interpreted as an organism dowered with native powers and entitled to a full opportunity to develop those powers to the uttermost! Everything else in the world is judged by us as contributory to this great end. Even the stars of heaven seem to lose their meaning, if they be not regarded as fighting in their courses for the fulfillment of man's highest destiny! And if with the stars, how much more with the institutions and practices of this society in which we live and move and have our being, like the rosebush in the garden. Take slavery, for example! The defenders of slavery were never lacking for arguments to prove the necessity and worth of this system as a method of industrial organization. Not a few of the arguments in their day seemed wholly plausible. But steadily, in all sections of the globe, the institution of involuntary servitude became discredited, and finally disappeared under the moral censure of the race, for the simple reason that it proved itself to be physically, mentally and spiritually disastrous to mankind. Masters and slaves alike deteriorated under the influence of the system. Once established, the system was found to mark a certain limit of individual and social development beyond which the community was never able to advance. Hence, for no other reason than its deleterious effects on human nature, this stupendous institution had to go! So also with the slums of our great cities. I have heard, as you have, a hundred reasons why our slums must be abolished. They are ugly, they are unsanitary, they are inconvenient, they are expensive. None of these indictments touches the heart of the problem, however, as does the charge of injustice. The slums are unjust—unjust to the men and women who have to live in their noisome dwellings, unjust to the children who have to play in their streets and gutters, unjust to the human nature of which they constitute environment of life. It is no accident that the great majority of our defectives, degenerates, paupers, and criminals come from the crowded and poverty stricken quarters of our great cities. No accident that our prostitutes and gunmen are more likely to be the product of the lower East Side than of the upper West Side! Human nature is the same in the one place as in the other; but the environment in the one case is favorable, and in the other case is not only unfavorable, but repressive and corruptive. Human nature in the slums is like the seed cast by the sower into the stones and thorns, which either took no root, or taking root and springing up, was straightway choked.

Human nature, therefore, is rightly to be considered as a spiritual organism, confronted by the task of growth; and the social system as an environment favorable or unfavorable to growth. This conception, new in our time, sheds a wholly new light, does it not, on this whole matter of changing human nature as a condition of bringing in the Kingdom of God upon the earth? There is good reason, I grant you, for being dissatisfied with human nature as it is. It may be, in some few instances, that human nature under examination is unhealthy, or defective, or out-and-out degenerate. Such instances, however, I believe to be rare. In the vast majority of cases, the human nature, with which we are so much dissatisfied, is not in any original sense bad, and does not need to be changed. It simply is planted in bad soil, or is shut off from the sunshine and the rain of heaven, or is forced to breathe a polluted atmosphere. Its growth, which under proper conditions would be normal and therefore beautiful, is being interfered with by the unfavorable environment. All of which means that what poor, sick, half-starved, undeveloped human nature needs is not a change but a *chance!* It needs a social opportunity to reveal its powers, to develop its capacities, to show what it is and what it is able to do. And it is the discovery, or the sudden realization, of this fact in our time, which has made our age the age of the social question, and the great gospel of our age the gospel of social reform. To change human nature, to labor with individual men and women, to convert and educate, this may be helpful and even important; but it is not, and never can be, the essential thing. Not at least if you believe, as I do, that human nature in its original condition is sound to the core! What is needed is a direct attack upon the social ills which ruin human nature, a change not of the organism but of the environment, a decent social order as the condition of decent men and women. What we want is the Kingdom! Seek this first, and all the things that we want in the hearts and minds of men "will be added unto you."

Let me take some specific examples to illustrate this doctrine! Here is this great matter, now before the nation, of the prohibition of the liquor traffic. For generations we have been told that the only way to solve this problem is to change human nature, to cure the thirst for liquor in the individual who seeks satisfaction, and thus creates the traffic. Never was there a more flagrant instance of putting the cart before the horse! There is nothing in human nature which craves alcoholic drink. There is no instinctive desire for this particular kind of stimulant. On the contrary, our natures loathe the drink, turn from it in revulsion, fight against it. Never yet has there been a man, free of the hereditary taint, who did not begin to drink against the desires of his nature, and in response to the insidious temptation either of the liquor business or the liquor custom. How clearly does Jack London bring out this fact in his *John Barleycorn.* From the very beginning he was afflicted with a "loathing for alcohol." "This loathing," he says, "I never got over." But, he adds tragically, "I conquered it. To this day I recognize it every time I take a drink. The palate never ceases to rebel, and the palate can be trusted to know what is good for the body." Jack London became and remained for years, a drunkard; for no other reason, as he tells us, than that liquor was a part of the world in which he lived. Hence his plea, in this wonderful confession of his, for prohibition! "It will be easy," he says. "The only ones that will be hurt will be the topers . . . of a single generation. I am one of these, and I make solemn assurance . . . that it won't hurt me very much to stop drinking when no one else drinks and when no drink is obtainable. On the other hand, the overwhelming proportion of young men are so normally non-alcoholic, that, never having had access to alcohol, they will never miss it. They will

know of the saloon only in the pages of history, and they will think of the saloon as a quaint old custom similar to bull-baiting and the burning of witches."

The same thing holds true of this business of poverty. Think of the centuries that we have been taught to believe that poverty has its roots in the weaknesses or sins of human nature! Think of how many of us were taught to believe that the poor were poor because they deserved to be poor! And yet, all along there were those who knew that this idea was the grossest kind of a libel on human nature. Why, way back in old Israel there was that unknown writer of *Proverbs,* who laid down the dictum that "the destruction of the poor is their poverty." And behold, we are just now beginning to understand the truth of this statement. There is nothing on earth the matter with the poor, as regards their individual lives, except the plain simple fact that they are poor. The defects and faults of the vast majority of them can be traced right straight back to the circumstance that they are starved in body, mind and soul. To talk about converting or redeeming these people is an insult to those who ask only a social chance to show their worth. Even as it is, the amount of native virtue that is displayed among all our poor, and the number of individuals who manage to escape the toils by sheer innate capacity of character or genius, give proof of unmeasured natural resources that need only proper environment to grow and flourish. Hence the challenge, sounded in our time as never before in history, that poverty be attacked and abolished by social action. And hence the assurance of results in terms of better men and women! "To remove want and the fear of want," writes Henry George in *Progress and Poverty,* "to give to all classes leisure, and comfort, and independence, the decencies and refreshments of life, the opportunities of mental and moral development, would be like turning water into a desert. The sterile waste would clothe itself with verdure, and the barren places where life seemed banned would ere long be dappled with the shade of trees, and musical with the song of birds."

The same thing holds true, also, I believe, of this terrific phenomenon of war. Never was there a greater falsehood perpetrated in history than the charge that men have fought in the past, fight today, and will always continue to fight, because, like dogs and cats, "it is their nature to." Man is not a belligerent animal. His passions are not competitive but co-operative; his instincts are not those of hate, but those of love. Selfishness and lust are within him, of course; but these are balanced by unselfishness, generosity and self-sacrifice. And the story of evolution shows nothing more impressively than the fact that it is these "mutual aid" factors, as they are called, which are everywhere predominant. Love, as John Fiske has shown us so convincingly, has "cosmic roots," and these roots strike down to the most primitive depths of human nature. War therefore has nothing to do with the instincts of men. If men have fought from time immemorial, it is because of influences quite apart from the influence of their own nature. Wars not for the love of fighting, but wars for pasturage, wars for new agricultural fields, wars of religion, wars of dynasties, wars of economic and political imperialism, wars of revolt against oppression, wars of defence against attack—these are the wars that we know; and these belong not to the nature of man but to the nature of society. Leave men alone, release them from the bonds of ancient systems, free them from armaments, kings, diplomats and national interests, and see how easy it is for them to live together in amity and concord. Contrast Europe and America at this moment! Here in our country we have exactly the same aggregation of humanity that you find across the seas. Here are English and Germans and French and Italians and Russians and Bulgarians and Turks—all living together within a certain geographical area exactly as they are in Europe. But here they are living in a land which has no historical boundaries, no ancient royal houses, no tangle of treaties and alliances and balances of power, no economic struggle of state against state. Here there is simply a virgin land, with open field and free opportunity for all. And behold, in America, if not in the rest of the world, the problem of "peace on earth, goodwill among men" has been solved.

It is in such examples as these that we find concrete answer to our question as to whether we must change human nature in order to abolish social ills and get a better world. And the answer, I trust, is plain. Our business, in this stage of the world's history at least, is not primarily with human nature, but with society. Our program of action for the performance of this business is twofold. It involves, in the first place, a trust in human nature—a confidence that men, in origin and character, are sound and healthy organisms. It involves in the second place provision by social changes of the best possible environment for the growing of these organisms—a chance to every man to fulfill his powers. Such a program, directed to such an end, will solve every problem that we have. There will still be need for moral training and religious instruction. There will still be opportunity to teach the young, correct the incorrigible, convert the sinner. But the problems now vexing us will disappear, at least as problems. Human nature, like the seed flung into the good soil, will redeem itself. The Kingdom of God, peopled by its citizens of the spirit, will be at hand. A very simple parable will clinch the lesson. You go into the Grand Central station of the subway at six o'clock in the evening, and you see a raging mob of men and women, pushing, tramping and fighting for entrance into crowded cars; and as you look at the men shoving the women, and the women resisting the men, you say, What brutes these people are—what savages must inhabit this city! Then you go to an uptown station at the same hour, and there see a few people entering empty cars with quietness, courtesy and mutual consideration for others. Different people, you say? Not at all! The people are the same. The conditions are different!

What this means for the church is of course obvious. It is well expressed by Prof. Simon N. Patten, when he says, "The mission of the church is not to make men religious but to make men normal." The church of the past busied itself with the task of changing men—making them over from something that they naturally were to something that they theologically ought to be. The church of the future, with abounding confidence, will take men just as they are, and try to give them opportunity to be normal, to show what they are, to bring forth the fruit that they were born to grow. This means that the church which will count for something tomorrow will be the church

which is dedicated primarily to social action. This church will put forth not theological creeds but platforms of social reform. It will be active not in prayer meetings but in political campaigns. It will deal not with the conversion of souls but with the construction of a world which will make men normal. "For the normal man is a religious man," says Prof. Patten, "and to make men normal is to start a train that leads to religious awakening." The church will see that the world as a society, and men as individuals, need but one thing—Justice; and this Justice it will strive to release that it may "run down like a mighty stream" into the wilderness of human life. And behold, as in the case of the waters that poured from the foundations of Ezekiel's temple, "men shall be healed," and "everything shall live whither the river cometh."

THE STUDY TABLE

Book Notices

Most readers, who know anything of "The Poet," know that the boys' school at Bolpur is one of his dearest enterprises.[1] It is the attempt to reproduce in these latter days the forest school of the great teachers of ancient India—to restore the *ashram* or forest sanctuary. Of it Tagore himself says: "I came to live in the Shantiniketan sanctuary founded by my father and there gradually gathered around me, under the shades of sal trees, boys from distant homes." The school has grown and prospered and today is famous. Its story is told by W. W. Pearson, who has been a teacher there and who aims to present a simple picture of the impression the school has made on him and of the daily thoughts and doings of the boys. To his account is added a little story by Datish Chandra Roy, who was one of Tagore's first helpers, who died very young. Of him Tagore says: . . . a boy of nineteen, "born with a luminosity of soul," he "felt attached to me and my ideas and devoted himself to building up the ashram and serving the boys with living food from the fulness of his life." His story is the tale of a boy from one of the old forest schools, when he went forth from his guru to the life of the outside world. The book is illustrated with pictures by a pupil in the school and in its combination of narrative, tale and illustration is unusual and dreamy after the Indian fashion. The proceeds from its sale are to be used for the building of a new hospital at the school.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is putting out a "Library of Christian Cooperation" in six volumes. One only interests us and the others will, no doubt, be noticed by other contributors. Volume IV deals with our national relations to Japan.[2] It consists of a variety of documents, all of which have probably been printed elsewhere but which are here brought together into convenient form for reference. It will be remembered that in 1913 memorials were received from missionaries and Christian workers in Japan asking the Federal Council to take definite action looking toward a better relation between the two countries. In response to this appeal, Dr. Sidney L. Gulick was employed to travel through the United States speaking and writing upon the American-Japanese problem and he and Prof. Shailer Matthews were sent to Japan as ambassadors of the Federal Council. All the documents relating to these two definite efforts are here brought together, with the exception of the special report made by the embassy upon its return to the United States. To them are added reprints of Dr. Gulick's various discussions and reports. His report of investigations in Hawaii, his suggested method of dealing with naturalization, his analysis of the American-Japanese problem, his carefully selected bibliography of the entire discussion are materials of great importance and it is well worth while to have them all in a single handy volume.

To sketch the course of *East Indian trade* through forty centuries is no small task. It is done in most condensed fashion in a little book by A. J. Morrison.[3] Step by step the movement is traced: in a first part, from the old East of ancient Babylon, westward through the Mediterranean world to the days of Venetian greatness and Portuguese glory. In a second part, the wider sweep of World trade, still westward, is followed from the enterprises of Dutch and Spanish, English and Americans, again to Babylon, in 1914 waking to new importance and commercial significance. The idea is a fine one; it is carried through conscientiously; the matter is so interesting that the reader overlooks the dry and studiedly awkward style of the presentation. FREDERICK STARR.

1. *Shantiniketan. The Bolpur School of Rabindranath Tagore.* W. W. Pearson. New York: 1916. The Macmillan Co. 16°, pp. 130. Price, $1.50 net.

2. *The Church and International Relations.* Prepared by Charles S. Macfarland. New York: 1917. Missionary Education Movement. 16°, pp. v. 312.

3. *East by West. Essays in Transportation.* A. J. Morrison. Boston: 1918. Sherman, French and Co. 16°, pp. iv. 177. Price, $1.25 net.

JUDGMENT DAYS.

If an angel from heaven should come and say:
"This is thy day, thine appointed day,
When all that thou art shall be clearly known,
And all that is thine shall be thine, alone,
And every word that thou ever hast said
Shall come to echo about thine head,
And every foe thine ill has made,
And what thou hast done to make others afraid,
Likewise all the friends that thou hast won
By kindly thought and acts well done—
Ah, all shall come today unto thee,
Revealing thy life's true quality,"
My soul would tremble in awe and fear
In knowledge that judgment was drawing near.

Alas! the angel cometh each morn,
And I in pride and a confident scorn
Hear not the word which the angel saith,
As onward I go in my wonted path,
Unheeding the fact, to all men clear,
That judgment is daily drawing near.

LESLIE WILLIS SPRAGUE.
9 Mt. Vernon St., Worcester, Mass.

"A pessimist likes a thing he can't enjoy, and an optimist enjoys a thing he can't like."

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The History and Practice of Religion

Being the First Year's Work in the Seven Years' Course of Study, as Given by Jenkin Lloyd Jones to His Classes at the Abraham Lincoln Centre

Beginnings

Myth and Legend Versus the True Story

Prepared for UNITY by Miss May Johnson and Mrs. William Rothmann

XIV.

The Thought of Sin

We grant that human life is mean, but how do we know that it is mean? —*Emerson.*

Thus far in this series we have been absorbed in the study of man's physical place in the universe, the physical unfolding of the universe itself, geologically, biologically, with a hint of the astronomical development. The remaining topics are concerned largely with the evolution of psychic man; the thought of sin, death, the origin and continuance of soul, the thought of heaven and hell, early pivotal laws, codes, the ten commandments, a possible new civic code, etc. A continued enthusiastic interest will depend largely on an uninterrupted study. We will remember that a prompt and regular habit marks the distinction between civilized and uncivilized man. We are apt to think of primitive man as lazy, but a truer estimate reveals him as simply purposeless, unorganized.

Myth and science again come into sharp contrast. Man had traveled far before he achieved the thought of sin. The word itself is a high attainment of the human soul. The heavenly road is reached when the power to be ashamed, to possess a sense of guilt is realized. The sense of sin bespeaks the long triumphant psychical evolution of the heart of man.

The origin of sin is a beautiful, simple story in the mythologies of the world. Two instances will serve to indicate their trend.

The story of man's "Fall" in Eden, the temptation of Eve and the demoralization of Adam through whom came sin into the world, which yielding brought calamity to the whole race, is the Semitic story. I use the word Semitic advisedly because the myth is older than the Hebrew version which we have in Genesis. Farther back on the Babylonian tablets the story of the fall is graphically told. There we see the tree, the woman sitting under it holding an apple and the man ready to receive the fruit, which shows that this Genesis story, like so much of the Hebrew mythology, had an earlier version and a known source from the regions of the Euphrates and the Tigris as well as the Nile.

The Greek myth is more beautiful but still puts the responsibility of sin on woman. To Pandora was entrusted a casket of gifts. Pandora means "all gifts." But curiosity got the better of Pandora and she did that which had been forbidden by the divinities, opened the lid and out there flew all the ills and joys of life. One version is that she saw what she was doing, and like a naughty child hurriedly shut the lid on the bottom gift, Hope. And Hope proved able to cope with the ills let loose upon the world.

Science shows that we have a perfectly clear though long road to travel when we trace the rise of psychic man into the realm of sin. One element of sin is ignorance. We blunder to one another's hurt. We poison ourselves to death because we do not know any better; we play with fire. Knowledge is a great cure for sin; a great evil cleanser is intelligence.

Another element of sin lies in our weaknesses, our incapacities. We are inadequate to the tests of life.

Walter Rauschenbusch in his last book, "A Theology for the Social Gospel," seems to make selfishness synonymous with sin and selfishness is the incapacity to recognize a larger self-service, a failure to enter into the social life of the individual.

Very early on the biological tree we found a realization of community interest. The ant and bee, wolf and hog, monkey and elephant are all alive to social organization. The fourth and fifth chapters of "Darwin's Descent of Man" are full of interesting illustrations along this line.

Dr. Rauschenbusch will startle and surprise the orthodox world by reducing the old doctrine of sin, the fall and the devil into social equivalents. Those are grievous sins in his philosophy that impinge on the well being of society; the well being of the community should be the demand of the ethical soul.

There is a truth in the old idea of depravity, "In Adam's fall we sinned all." We do inherit the sins of our fathers, not only through the blood but through the community. A child may have in his brain some malign inheritance that will interfere with his development, but he is menaced a hundredfold more by the sins, crimes and wickednesses or weaknesses of the society into which he was born. Man is born surcharged with passion, nature over-doing it in order to be sure to do it, the sex instinct is a tyrannical menace, the appetites for eating and drinking are debauching, but we can put it down as the conclusion of science that inebriety and the sins of sex are not necessarily the product of low organism, of coarse natures, not even of stolid consciences, but are largely the fruit of social environment. There is an eternal text, "The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation," but theologians, even the Liberals, professors of freedom and representatives of liberty, too often fail to grasp the fact that the well being of the corporate life of which we are a part is absolutely linked with the well being of the community.

The imperative thing in the modern doctrine of sin is to recognize that it is the product of human weakness. We may know the right but be utterly incapable of battling individually with the blizzard, and it needs the co-operative intelligence and power of the community to make safe the life of the weak.

"The soul is lost that is saved alone." That is a high gift of culture that enables man to rejoice in the plural number. In this light the ethics of the New Testament become very plain and will enable us to rightly interpret the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, also the Golden Rule and the Beatitudes. In such interpretations is the book of Dr. Rauschenbusch going to be an inspiration, a guide and a comfort to thousands of so-called orthodox preachers who have heretofore felt that their business was forever finished when they had done

everything they could to get men to "hit the sawdust trail" and make their own "calling and election sure."

It is possible for the orthodox Christian, follower of the Nazarene, to utterly fail in grasping this fundamental element in the teaching of Jesus. Jesus did not not know hell nor damnation. He was a social reformer, a man of the people, who suffered with the people and recoiled from the formalism of the priest and the tyranny of the military. This is the reason why, within the last five or ten years, most of the books about Jesus that grip you are books that are written not by preachers but by students of social problems, leaders of social reforms, economists and radicals.

For my Confirmation Class I have three theories of the baby. The first that obtains generally in a modern home, the new baby of a new mother is born a little angel, a delightful piece of innocence and sweetness, as clean as a sheet of paper, and its career will depnd upon what is written on that pure white paper. The second theory says that however sweet he may look he is a bramble bush, full of briars, prone to wickedness, and that his career depends upon efficiency in clearing out the briars, in a miraculous transformation. The third theory says the baby is a garden patch, a fertile bit of ground, with seeds of good and evil, weeds and strawberries growing side by side. The baby's subsequent career will depend upon the tillage of that ground.

One thing is perfectly sure, the child is not born into the world spotless, innocent and without blemish. Neither is the child born into the world a lump of defiance, prone to evil and doomed to woe unless snatched by miraculous methods. The other thing is true that the child is born into the world with great aptitudes and possibilities, subject to home training and high cultivation.

Sin, however we may define it, forms rounds in the ladder upon which we climb out of one virtue into another. The virtue of today becomes the vice of tomorrow. He was a poor Indian who did not carry more than one scalp on his belt. There has been a stage in human social development when to steal was a virtue, illustrated by Gypsies who among themselves held a high code of honor, but to cheat and steal from the outside world was perfectly legitimate. Sin is a relative thing.

You will see a connection between this lesson and a poem by Anna Hempstead Branch, now connected with an East Side settlement in New York.

TO A NEW YORK SHOP-GIRL DRESSED FOR SUNDAY.

To-day I saw the shop-girl go
Down gay Broadway to meet her beau.

Conspicuous, splendid, conscious, sweet,
She spread abroad and took the street.

And all the niceness would forbid,
Superb, she smiled upon and did.

Let other girls, whose happier days
Preserve the perfume of their ways,

Go modestly. The passing hour
Adds splendor to their opening flower.

But from this child too swift a doom
Must steal her prettiness and bloom,

Toil and weariness hide the grace
That pleads a moment from her face.

So blame her not if for a day
She flaunts her glories while she may.

She half perceives, half understands,
Snatching her gifts with both her hands.

The little strut beneath the skirt
That lags neglected in the dirt,

The indolent swagger down the street—
Who can condemn such happy feet!

Innocent! vulgar—that's the truth!
Yet with the darling wiles of youth!

The bright, self-conscious eyes that stare
With such hauteur, beneath such hair!
Perhaps the men will find me fair!

Charming and charmed, flippant, arrayed,
Fluttered and foolish, proud, displayed,
Infinite pathos of parade!

The bangles and the narrowed waist—
The tinsled boa—forgive the taste!
Oh, the starved nights she gave for that,
And bartered bread to buy her hat!

She flows before the reproachful sage
And begs her woman's heritage.

Dear child, with the defiant eyes,
Insolent with the half surmise
We do not quite admire, I know
How foresight frowns on this vain show!

And judgment, wearily sad, may see
No grace in such frivolity.

Yet which of us was ever bold
To worship Beauty, hungry and cold!

Scorn famine down, proudly expressed
Apostle to what things are best.

Let him who starves to buy the food
For his soul's comfort find her good,

Nor chide the frills and furbelows
That are the prettiest things she knows.

Poet and prophet in God's eyes
Make no more perfect sacrifice.

Who knows before what inner shrine
She eats with them the bread and wine?

Poor waif! One of the sacred few
That madly sought the best they knew!

Dear—let me lean my cheek tonight
Close, close to yours. Ah, that is right.

How warm and near! At last I see
One beauty shines for thee and me.

So let us love and understand—
Whose hearts are hidden in God's hand.

And we will cherish your brief Spring
And all its fragile flowering.

God loves all prettiness, and on this
Surely his angels lay their kiss.

QUESTIONS.

(1) Give the Semitic and Greek myths of the origin of sin.

(2) What is sin from the standpoint of the sociologist?

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THE FIELD

"The World is my country, to do Good is my Religion."

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THREE FABLES

The Sum of Wisdom.

On a day the Great King called all his Wise Men about him and asked of them, "What is the Sum of Wisdom?"

The Wise Men were astonished at the question, for none could answer it. Each knew that to fail to answer the King would be fatal.

So the Wise Men called a Council, with the permission of the King, to debate upon the question. It was agreed that the Council should remain in session eleven days and thirteen nights. If the question remained unanswered by the dawn of the morning after the last meeting, all the Wise Men would be thrown into the Den of Conscience.

The Wise Men were much troubled and many made their wills hastily.

They sent messengers at last, after seven days debate, to ask the assistance of all the Wise Men of the World; and by the last day the King's city was crowded with the hosts of them. And the King's Fool Killer was hopefully sharpening his broad axe.

At last the grey dawn put to flight the last night of the Council, and the question was not answered.

When all seemed hopeless and each of the Wise Men had resigned himself for the quiet of Oblivion, a Woman came to the door of the great Council hall, and asked to be admitted.

"But you are a woman!" said the Guardian.

"Yes; I am a woman," she answered. "I am the Mother of All Wisdom."

The Guardian did not see fit to agree with this, but he nevertheless went into the Council room where the Wise Men were pacing the floor in prayer, anticipating dissolution.

Approaching the Chairman, the Guardian said, "A woman is at the door who says she is the Mother of Wisdom. What is your will?"

And the Wise Men laughed, and some called out "Choke her!" and others "Throw her into the gutter!" But one said, "Bring her in!" And the others, after much discussion, agreed.

The Woman was admitted and led to the center of the floor.

"What would you, Only a Woman?" asked the Chairman.

"I am the Mother of Wisdom," she said slowly.

And dropped her cloak.

From the folds of her garment a Child stepped forth.

"This Child," said the Woman, "is more wise than any here. He will answer the question."

The Wise Men laughed.

But a bright light shone in the Chairman's eyes, and he came down from his jeweled throne on the dais and knelt at the Child's feet, saying gently, "What is the Sum of Wisdom?"

And the Child said, "Great Sire, I do not know."

And the Woman said, "That is the true answer."

And the Wise Men marveled and were afraid, and some wept.

Brass trumpets took the answer to the Great King.

The Truthful Jewel.

There was once a wise man who thought he might understand Life if only he could look into the minds of his fellows as God must. So he went to a very great jeweler in the bazaar and explained his idea.

"Could you make me a great diamond eye of such power that I could inspect the minds of those whom I meet on my journey?" he said.

The jeweler thought such an instrument might be made. "But," said he, "it will cost a great deal of money for so fine a stone."

The wise man returned to his house and sold all he possessed, including his wife and daughter. With the proceeds he sought the jeweler and found the stone, magnificiently cut and polished, awaiting him. "An angel helped us," said the jeweler.

And the wise man took the stone and went into the market place. Holding the gem to his eye he could indeed look into the inmost depths of each passerby's mind.

One man he saw was planning murder. Another was considering a theft. A third was counting unearned profits. The wise man was surprised. "What miserable thoughts!" he said.

He left the rialto and went into a cafe. It would not be permissible to say what he found in the minds of those who were there.

So he went into a church, then into a museum, then an art gallery, then a lecture hall, a theatre, and, finally, into a ballroom where a great prince was giving a reception and where he felt certain he would find good thoughts. It was midnight when he left this place. The evil hour, when ugliness triumphs for a time over beauty.

He came away in great haste and ran down to the river side. There he threw the truthful jewel into the flood and leaped after it.

The jewel was washed up on a distant shore. There some children found it and, after long striving, broke it into pieces. Each child kept a tiny piece. After a time every child in the land had a bit of the stone. Its fragments spread through all the world, eventually.

Now you can understand why some children seem to know just what you are thinking.

His Books.

It is said that one may tell a man's philosophy by an inspection of his books.

One day I called upon a friend,—a young man whom I had met in a casual

way but in whom I had instantly been greatly interested. I had invited him to my home, presented him to my wife, entertained him on several occasions and yet had not quite discovered him. Either he was too subtle, too clever to be read easily or there was nothing whatever of soul in him. I therefore accepted the opportunity to look at his books with much genuine eagerness.

His room was small, well furnished and in fairly good order. Against one wall stood an open desk, and near by a large bookcase entirely filled with well-bound volumes. When I could I read over the titles. I was surprised.

Among the works I saw there were such contemporary examples as Harry Kemp's "Cry of Youth," Harold Hersey's "Singing Flame," Amy Lowell's "Swords and Poppy Seed," Braithwaite's "Anthology of Magazine Verse," Ernest Crosby's "Swords and Ploughshares," and the like. I guessed at once that he was interested in poetry.

"You must enjoy verse," I said, "you have so much of it."

"No; on the contrary I never read poetry," I heard him answer through a maze of wonderment.

I looked again. I saw among other things Allen Upward's "The New Word," Lord Dunsany's "Dreamer's Tales," Gordon Craig's "Art of the Theatre," Voynich's "The Gadfly," and Frank Harris' great novel, "The Bomb."

"Something of rebel after all," I thought.

Just then he was saying something about voting for Wilson at the last election. I tried again.

I found Sprading's "Great Libertarians," Olive Schreiner's "Story of an African Farm" and Oscar Wilde's "Dorian Gray." In another shelf, one volume of Carl Marx, and Emma Goldman's "Anarchism and Other Essays."

"Have you read these books?" I asked at last.

"I should say not," he replied. "I'm a university man. That stuff belongs to my brother. You know he's in jail for refusing to register. Damn fool!"

JAMES WALDO FAWCETT.

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